1 2 3 4 5 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON 6 7 BRADY EDMONDS, on behalf of himself and those similarly situated, 8 NO. Plaintiffs, 9 NATIONWIDE COLLECTIVE ACTION VS. **COMPLAINT** 10 AMAZON.COM, INC., a Foreign for Profit 11 Corporation; AMAZON LOGISTICS, INC., a Foreign for Profit Corporation; AMAZON.COM 12 SERVICES, INC., a Foreign for Profit Corporation, 13 Defendants. 14 15 Plaintiff, BRADY EDMONDS on behalf of himself and those similarly situated, by and 16 through undersigned counsel, files this Complaint against Defendants, AMAZON.COM, INC. 17 ("ACI"), AMAZON LOGISTICS, INC. ("ALI"), and AMAZON.COM SERVICES, INC. ("ACS", 18 together with ACI and ALI, "Amazon" or "Defendants") and states as follows: 19 I. NATURE OF THE CASE 20 21 1. Amazon is the largest digital retailer in the United States, recently becoming the second company in world history to reach \$1 trillion in value. In the second guarter of 22 2019 alone, Amazon's net sales were \$63.4 billion, compared with \$52.9 billion in the second 23 quarter of 2018.<sup>2</sup> Naturally, "the number of packages that Amazon needs to . . . handle has 24 25 <sup>1</sup> See, Amazon Just Became the Second Company to Reach \$1 Trillion, http://time.com/money/5386380/amazon-1-trillion-jeff-bezos-net-worth. . 26 <sup>2</sup> See Amazon Press Release to Investors, https://ir.aboutamazon.com/news-releases/news-releasedetails/amazoncom-announces-second-quarter-sales-20-634-billion. 27 TERRELL MARSHALL LAW GROUP PLLC

doubled in the past five years to about 1.2 billion" packages per year.<sup>3</sup>

- 2. Amazon prides itself on being a company that is "customer obsessed." For that reason, Amazon has taken greater control over its deliveries in order to ensure customer satisfaction—control that it previously lacked when utilizing traditional delivery channels such as FedEx and UPS. In order to take greater control over its delivery processes, Amazon created its own delivery channel.
- 3. As a central part of its delivery and logistics business, Amazon contracts with incorporated delivery service providers ("DSPs") all around the country, through its Delivery Service Provider ("DSP") program, and their employees, in order to handle the influx of customer orders, and to retain control over every aspect of the delivery process.
- 4. These DSPs, in turn, hire drivers like Plaintiff to deliver the Amazon packages within the DSP's service areas.
- 5. However, even though Plaintiff and the other drivers were nominally employed through DSPs, Amazon directed and controlled Plaintiff and other drivers, dictating nearly every aspect of their delivery work. *See infra*.
- 6. As such, Amazon jointly employed Plaintiff and these other similarly situated drivers and is liable for wage and hour compliance for these drivers.
- 7. This lawsuit arises under the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. § 201 et seq. ("FLSA") for Amazon's failure to pay Plaintiff and other similarly situated drivers overtime wages for all time worked in excess of forty hours in a workweek in violation of the FLSA.
- 8. Plaintiff brings this suit as a collective action pursuant to Section 216(b) of the FLSA and seeks to include all drivers who worked for Defendants through DSPs except those based in the state of Washington.
- 9. The Fair Labor Standard Act of 1938, 29 U.S.C. § 201 et, seq. ("FLSA") was enacted to ensure "the maintenance of the minimum standard of living necessary for health,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Amazon is forging further into deliveries, https://www.businessinsider.com/amazon-launches-delivery-service-partner-program-2018-6.

efficiency, and general well-being of workers." 29 U.S.C. § 202(a).

- 10. The FLSA establishes minimum wage and overtime requirements for covered employees to achieve this broad remedial purpose. 29 U.S.C. §§ 206, 207.
- 11. These provisions, and the private right of action granted to employees, prevent employers from pilfering rightfully earned wages of employees. *See Billingsley v. Citi Trends Inc.*, 2014 WL 1199501 (11th Cir. Mar. 25, 2014).
- 12. As a non-exempt employee, Plaintiff is entitled to applicable overtime wages for each week he was suffered and permitted to work more than 40 hours by Amazon.

  Freeman v. Key Largo Volunteer Fire & Rescue Dept., Inc., 494 Fed. Appx. 940, 942 (11th Cir. 2012), cert. denied, 134 S.Ct. 62 (U.S. 2013) ("To be 'employed' includes when an employer 'suffer[s] or permit[s] the [employee] to work'").
- 13. Amazon failed to pay Plaintiff and similarly situated drivers for all overtime hours worked pursuant to a policy applicable to Plaintiff and similarly situated drivers, whereby Amazon required its DSPs to hire drivers as employees through the DSPs, not Amazon.
- 14. As further explained below, Amazon jointly employed these drivers and is liable for overtime compensation owed to Plaintiff and the similarly situated drivers.
- 15. Amazon's policies, practices, and conduct violate the FLSA, which requires non-exempt employees, such as the Plaintiff and other similarly situated drivers, to be compensated for their overtime work at a rate of one and one-half times their regular rate of pay and also to receive at least the federally mandated minimum wage per week. *See* 29 U.S.C.§§ 206, 207(a).
- 16. Plaintiff BRADY EDMONDS brings this collective action to recover the unpaid overtime and minimum wages owed to him and all other similarly situated drivers employed by Amazon through DSPs nationwide.

1 17. Plaintiff BRADY EDMONDS's consent to join this Section 216(b) collective 2 action is being filed contemporaneously with this action. 3 II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE 4 18. Jurisdiction in this Court is proper as the claims are brought pursuant to the 5 Fair Labor Standards Act, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 201, et seq., hereinafter called the "FLSA") 6 to recover unpaid back wages, an additional equal amount as liquidated damages, obtain 7 declaratory relief, and reasonable attorneys' fees and costs. 8 19. This Court has jurisdiction over Plaintiff's FLSA claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 9 § 1331, arising under 29 U.S.C. § 216(b). 10 20. Venue is proper in this judicial district because Defendants maintain their 11 principal place of business within this judicial district, and the decisions to implement the 12 policies and practices complained of herein were made within this judicial district. 13 **III. PARTIES** 14 21. Plaintiff, Brady Edmonds, worked for Amazon as a driver from June 2018 thru February 2019. 15 16 22. Mr. Edmonds regularly worked 10-15 hours per day and between 4-5 days per 17 week. 18 23. Plaintiff performed work for Amazon in the greater Jacksonville, Florida area. 19 24. Plaintiff's job as a driver was to take goods that had been transported in 20 interstate commerce and deliver them to customers of Amazon. 21 25. At all times relevant hereto, Plaintiff Brady Edmonds has been a current or 22 former "employee" of Amazon as that term is defined by the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. § 201 et seq, 23 because he was suffered and permitted to work delivering packages to Amazon customers in 24 connection with their purchases from Amazon.com. 25 26. Defendant Amazon.com, Inc. is a foreign corporation that has its principal place 26 of business at 410 Terry Ave N, Seattle, Washington 98216. 27

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the management of Defendants' business or affairs and with the authorization of the Defendants.

## IV. FLSA COVERAGE

## A. Employment Relationship

- 37. The FLSA defines the term "employer" to broadly include "any person acting directly or indirectly in the interest of an employer in relation to any employee." 29 U.S.C. 203(d).
- 38. On information and belief, Defendant Amazon.com, Inc., is the parent corporation of Amazon.com Services, Inc. (formerly Amazon.com, LLC), as well as Amazon Logistics, Inc., and together they operate one of the largest, if not the largest, ecommerce and logistics company in the world.
- 39. Through the operation of the Amazon.com website (<a href="www.amazon.com">www.amazon.com</a>), customers throughout the United States can and do purchase goods and/or materials that are then shipped throughout the United States to each customer's address.
- 40. In addition, Amazon is in the business of providing delivery service to customers, and that is the service that delivery drivers, such as Plaintiff, provide. The drivers' services are fully integrated into Amazon's business and managed by Amazon due to the level of control and oversight utilized by Amazon.
- 41. Workers who effectuate the delivery of Amazon's customers' orders, such as the drivers here, are integral to Amazon's business and must be managed by Amazon to ensure the fluid and consistent flow of deliveries to customers.
- 42. To ensure the highest customer service, satisfaction, and companywide uniformity, Amazon dictates and directly manages the work of Plaintiff and other local delivery drivers' or driver associates' (the term used by Amazon) employment in numerous ways by, among other things:

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1	a.	requiring all drivers to submit to an Amazon background check;
2	b.	participating in the decision to hire delivery drivers;
3	C.	providing training materials and training all drivers;
4	d.	requiring all drivers wear Amazon branded clothing;
5	e.	dictating the manner and type of clothing drivers wear;
6	f.	determining the make, model, and style of delivery van to be used
7		while delivering packages;
8	g.	on information and belief, providing financing to purchase delivery
9		vans;
.0	h.	requiring delivery vans contain Amazon insignia and logos (except when
1		extra trucks are rented due to volume exceeding capacity during the
.2		busy season);
.3	i.	requiring drivers to arrive at and load and unload Amazon packages
.4		from Amazon owned fulfillment and warehouse centers for delivery;
.5	j.	monitoring the performance of pre-trip and post-trip delivery van
.6		inspections;
.7	k.	requiring packages to be delivered to Amazon customers according to
.8		an exact schedule that dictates the order of delivery and provides the
.9		exact route to utilize;
20	l.	requiring drivers to report problems delivering packages directly to
21		Amazon;
22	m.	controlling the method and manner of troubleshooting delivery issues;
23	n.	tracking delivery performance including but not limited to the number
24		of packages delivered each day, the location of the driver at any given
25		time, and the efficiency of the deliveries as reported through Amazon
26		handheld devices or the Amazon Flex application for smart phones;
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- 52. Because a major and core business objective of Amazon is to provide delivery services, Amazon cannot operate its business without the drivers.
- 53. Plaintiff and similarly situated delivery drivers are dependent on Amazon, at a minimum, because Amazon provides: (i) all of the packages to deliver as part of its core business; (ii) delivery instructions including when, where, how and in what order to deliver the packages; (iii) delivery support in the event there is an issue delivering a particular package; and (iv) payment of wages through Amazon's payments under the delivery contracts with the DSPs.
- 54. On information and belief, Amazon keeps an employee file for each driver that includes contact information, employment information, history of complaints/issues for that driver, training records of the driver, on and off duty time, and information on the vehicle each driver operated in order to make deliveries.
  - 55. Defendants are employers as defined under the FLSA.
- 56. "To be 'employed' includes when an employer 'suffer[s] or permit[s] [the employee] to work." See Freeman v. Key Largo Volunteer Fire & Rescue Dept., Inc., 494 Fed. Appx. 940, 942 (11th Cir. 2012), cert. denied, 134 S.Ct. 62 (U.S. 2013).
  - 57. Plaintiff and the proposed class members were employed by Defendants.
- 58. Specifically, Plaintiff and the proposed class members were suffered and permitted to work unloading Amazon packages and delivering those packages on behalf of and for the sole benefit of Amazon.
- 59. Defendants jointly employed Plaintiff and proposed opt-in plaintiffs as local or last-mile delivery drivers at various locations throughout the United States.

## B. Enterprise and Individual Coverage

60. "The [FLSA] requires an employer to pay overtime compensation to an hourly worker if the employee can establish individual or enterprise coverage." *Silver v. Dr. Neal Krouse, D.O., P.A.*, 2007 WL 4098879 \*2 (S.D. Fla. Nov. 16, 2017) (*citing Thorne v. All* 

1 Restoration Svcs., Inc., 448 F.3d 1264, 1265 (11th Cir. 2006)). 2 61. Amazon.com, Inc. is an enterprise as defined within section 3(r)(1) of the FLSA. 3 See supra paras. 37-40. 4 Amazon Logistics, Inc. is an enterprise as defined within section 3(r)(1) of the 62. 5 FLSA. Id. 6 63. Amazon. Com Services, Inc. is an enterprise as defined within section 3(r)(1) of 7 the FLSA. Id. 8 64. Amazon.com, Inc., Amazon Logistics, Inc., and Amazon.com Services, Inc. are 9 together an enterprise as defined with section 3(r)(1) of the FLSA. Id. 10 65. FLSA enterprise coverage requires that an enterprise have "employees engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce" or have "employees handling, 11 12 selling, or otherwise working on goods or materials that have been moved in or produced for 13 commerce." 29 U.S.C. § 203(s)(1)(A) (emphasis added); see also Polycarpe. v. E&S Landscaping 14 Serv., Inc., 616 F.3d 1217, 1222-26 (11th Cir. 2010). Additionally, the enterprise must have 15 greater than \$500,000 in "annual gross volume of sales made or business done." Daniel v. 16 Pizza Zone Italian Grill & Sports Bar, Inc., 2008 WL 793660, at \*2 n.6 (M.D. Fla. Mar. 24, 2008). 17 Because nearly all goods and materials are moved in or produced via interstate commerce, 18 "virtually every business meeting the annual gross value requirement" is subject to enterprise 19 coverage. Id. 20 66. At all material times, Amazon has been an enterprise in commerce or in the 21 production of goods for commerce and has had at least two employees who handle or work 22 on goods or materials that have been moved in or produced for commerce. 29 U.S.C. § 23 203(s). 24 67. Amazon provides the last mile or local delivery of products and goods that are 25 purchased from Amazon.com, the leading online retailer in the United States. 26 27

preceding the filing of this Complaint (the "Class").

- 78. Plaintiff and Class members have all been subjected to the same policies that violate the FLSA, namely they have been paid flat rates each week with no premium compensation for overtime hours worked.
- 79. Plaintiff and the Class members are similarly situated in their claims against

  Defendants because their claim that Defendants employed or jointly employed them rely on a

  common set of facts regarding Defendants' control over their employment.
- 80. Plaintiff and similarly situated employees worked for Defendants delivering items purchased to customers who purchased those items from Amazon.
- 81. Amazon jointly employees Plaintiff and the Class members to perform a service integral to Amazon's business: the delivery of packages. *See supra*.
- 82. Plaintiff and Class members regularly worked in excess of forty hours in individual workweeks.
- 83. Before driving their routes, Plaintiff and Class members were routinely required to unload Amazon trucks each day and load the Amazon vans prior to the start of their routes.
- 84. Amazon failed to pay Plaintiff and Class members anything whatsoever for the time spent unloading the Amazon trucks and loading the Amazon vans before driving their designated route, typically two or more hours of work.
- 85. Plaintiff and the Class were paid "flat rates" based on the number of days they worked, irrespective of the number of hours they worked each week.
- 86. Amazon failed to pay Plaintiff and Class members the overtime premium of one and a half times their regular rate of pay for all time worked in excess of forty hours in individual workweeks.
- 87. Amazon, through its common policies, dictated the manner and means in which Plaintiff and the Class performed their jobs. *See supra*.
  - 88. Plaintiff and the Class are owed overtime wages by Amazon.

	89.	The specific job titles or precise job responsibilities of each Class member do
not p	revent co	ollective treatment.

- All Class members, irrespective of their job requirements, are entitled to overtime compensation for hours worked in excess of forty per workweek.
- All Class members, irrespective of the DSPs through whom they were employed by Amazon, are entitled to overtime compensation for hours worked in excess of forty per
- Although the exact amount of damages may vary across Class members, the damages for Class members can be easily calculated by a formula.
  - The claims of all Class members arise from a common nucleus of facts.
- Liability is based on a systematic course of wrongful conduct by Amazon through the policies and practices described above that caused harm to all Class members.
- These policies and practices were uniformly applicable to Plaintiff and the Class and did not depend on any driver's personal circumstances.
- Rather, the same policies and practices that resulted in the non-payment of overtime to Plaintiff applied and continue to apply to all Class members, regardless of which
- Amazon knowingly, willfully, or with reckless disregard carried out its illegal pattern or practice of failing to pay overtime compensation with respect to Plaintiff and the
- Amazon did not act in good faith or reliance on any of the following in formulating its pay practices: (a) case law, (b) the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. § 201, et seq., (c) Department of Labor Wage & Hour Opinion Letters or (d) the Code of Federal Regulations.
- During the relevant period, Amazon violated § 7(a)(1) and § 15(a)(2) by employing employees in an enterprise engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce within the meaning of the FLSA for one or more workweeks without compensating

	such employe	ees for t	their work at a rate of at least the time-and-one-half for all hours worked	
	in excess of 4	in excess of 40 hours in a workweek.		
	100.	Amaz	on has acted willfully in failing to pay Plaintiff and the Class members in	
	accordance w	vith the	law.	
	101.	Amaz	on has failed to maintain accurate records of Plaintiff's and the Class	
	members' wo	ork houi	rs in accordance with the law.	
	102.	Feder	al law mandates that an employer is required to keep for three years all	
payroll records and other records containing, among other things, the following inform			other records containing, among other things, the following information:	
		a.	The time of day and day of week on which the employees' workweek	
			begins;	
		b.	The regular hourly rate or pay for any workweek in which overtime	
			compensation is due under section 7(a) of the FLSA;	
		c.	An explanation of the basis of pay by indicating the monetary amount	
			paid on a per hour, per day, per week, or other basis;	
		d.	The amount and nature of each payment that, pursuant to section 7(e)	
			of the FLSA, is excluded from the "regular rate";	
		e.	The hours worked each workday and the total hours worked each	
			workweek;	
		f.	The total daily or weekly straight time earnings or wages due for hours	
			worked during the workday or workweek, exclusive or premium	
			overtime compensation;	
		g.	The total premium for overtime hours, which excludes the straight-time	
			earnings for overtime hours recorded under this section;	
		h.	The total additions to or deductions from wages paid each pay period	
			including employee purchase orders or wage assignments;	

1	i.	The dates, amounts, and nature of the items that make up the total	
	''	, , ,	
2		additions and deductions;	
3	j.	The total wages paid each pay period; and	
4	k.	The date of payment and the pay period covered by payment.	
5	29 C.F.R. §§ 516.	2, 516.5.	
6	103. A	mazon has not complied with federal law and has failed to maintain such	
7	records with res	pect to Plaintiff and the Class.	
8	104. B	ecause Amazon's records are inaccurate or inadequate, Plaintiff and Class	
9	members can m	eet their burden under the FLSA by proving that they, in fact, performed work	
10	for which they were improperly compensated, and produce sufficient evidence to show the		
11	amount and exte	ent of the work "as a matter of a just and reasonable inference." See, e.g.,	
12	Anderson v. Mt.	Clemens Pottery Co., 328 U.S. 680, 687 (1946).	
13		VI. COUNT I	
14		Violation of the FLSA—Overtime Wages	
15		Plaintiff on behalf of himself and similarly situated employees	
16	105. P	laintiff incorporates and re-alleges paragraphs 1 through 104 as though set	
17	forth herein.		
18	106. A	mazon has violated the FLSA by its failure to pay Plaintiff and Class members	
19	one and a half ti	mes their regular rate of pay for all time worked in excess of forty in a	
20	workweek.		
21	107. A	mazon directed Plaintiff to work, and Plaintiff did work, in excess of forty	
22	hours in individu	ial workweeks within the three years before the filing of this lawsuit.	
23	108. A	mazon also directed Class members to work in excess of forty hours in	
24	individual workv	veeks within the three years before the filing of this lawsuit.	
25	109. P	laintiff and the Class are entitled to be paid overtime wages for all time	
26	worked in exces	s of forty hours in individual workweeks.	
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1	110.	Amazon did not pay Plaintiff and the Class overtime wages for all time worked	
2	in excess of f	orty hours in individual workweeks.	
3	111.	Amazon's failure to pay Plaintiff and the Class overtime wages for all time	
4	worked in ex	cess of forty hours in individual workweeks was a violation of the FLSA.	
5	112.	Amazon failed to keep adequate records of the hours worked and pay earned	
6	by Plaintiff ar	nd Class members, in violation of section 211(c) of the FLSA. 29 U.S.C. § 211(c).	
7	113.	Plaintiff and the Class are entitled to recover unpaid overtime wages for up to	
8	three years b	efore the filing of this lawsuit because Amazon's violation of the FLSA was willful.	
9		VII. PRAYER FOR RELIEF	
10	WHEF	REFORE, Plaintiff prays for a judgment against Amazon as follows:	
11	That the Cou	rt determine that this action may be maintained as a collective action pursuant to	
12	Section 216(k	o) of the FLSA;	
13	A.	A judgment in the amount of all unpaid overtime wages owed to Plaintiff and	
14	the Class;		
15	В.	Liquidated damages in the amount equal to the unpaid overtime wage owed to	
16	Plaintiff and the Class;		
17	C.	Reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of this action as provided by the FLSA;	
18	and		
19	D.	Such other and further relief as this Court deems appropriate and just.	
20		VIII. JURY DEMAND	
21	Plaint	iff demands trial by jury on all issues so triable as a matter of right by jury	
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1	RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED AND DATED this 8th day of October, 2019.
	Resi ceri occi sosivii i co sinis oci day di occosci, 2013.
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